

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cooper.*



CROSSING THE BROOK.

THE RIVAL HEIRS.

CHAPTER I.

THE red sunset of a bright September day was lighting up the church spire, the windmill, the low thatched roofs and small windows of the little old-fashioned village of Maywood, lending a richer glow to the fading woodlands beyond it, gilding the turrets of an ancient manor house half hidden in their shade, and turning to liquid gold the rivulet that rippled by. They called that rivulet Maybrook. It was a tributary of the Lower Avon, and apt to become a considerable stream when swollen by winter

rains, but now ran low and shallow between two broad belts of grass and water-plants, which had usurped more than half its channel, and left high and dry the row of great stepping-stones which served the Maywood people as a bridge, or rather ford. The circumstance seemed in favour of a lady who approached it by one of the many green lanes leading from the Bath and Bristol Road, through farms and pasture lands, to the village. Her well-worn black silk Paisley shawl, and straw bonnet trimmed with primrose ribbon, indicated more of economy than means. Moreover, the lady was of a certain age; yet there was a comely freshness in her face and figure,

not quite matronly, but very unlike the popular idea of an old maid. She was about the middle height of woman, of substantial proportions, but well made and active; her complexion was fair, her cheek was rosy, her dark-brown hair and ivory teeth were still in good preservation; there was good humour and keen intelligence in her deep blue eyes: on the whole, she had a cheerful, sensible, self-reliant look, sure to command respect, if not liking, wherever she went. The lady was followed by a country boy, carrying a very small very neat trunk.

"Is that Maywood?" she inquired, pointing to the village.

"It is, miss; and you'll please to take care on them steps, for the stones is slippery: I went in myself last week, with the hamper of game the squire was sending to some gentlefolks in Bath; it did me no harm in course, but it would spoil your dress, miss. If you like, I'll go first and help you over," said the boy.

"Oh no; don't be afraid of me slipping, though I am much obliged to you for the warning; the trunk is quite enough for you to take care of;" and, with her dress carefully taken up, the lady was half way over the stones when the sound of coming wheels broke the quiet round them, and, emerging from some lane farther down the rivulet's banks, a gig came dashing up. Its occupant, who drove himself, uttered an exclamation of surprise, and brought his vehicle to a standstill. He had evidently expected a bridge; country carts were accustomed to cross that ford every day, but he and his gig were unaccustomed to the thing. The stranger cast a long look up and down the rivulet, then called to the boy, who was slowly following with the trunk, evidently in greater awe of the slippery steps than the lady, who now stood waiting for him on the village side. "I say, boy, is there no bridge in this quarter?"

"Not as I knows of," said the boy.

"Does everybody cross by those stones?"

"Yes; but I wouldn't advise you to try it with that there gig and horse."

The gentleman looked round him once more, looked after the lady and boy as they moved away, then turned his horse's head and drove back the way he came.

"Do you know that gentleman?" said the lady, as soon as he was out of sight. She had not appeared to notice him, and yet she had observed that he was a handsome, gentlemanly looking man, about her own age or more, for his hair was getting gray; yet he had an easy, careless, dashing air, like one who would be always young, and not over thoughtful; a look of unflinching nerve and vigour, of open-air and out-door life; and he had gazed after her.

"I can't say as I knows him, miss; but it's my belief he is Mr. Lansdale, the squire's cousin, or some relation of that sort, as is to be heir to the property."

"Indeed!" said the lady; and something in her eyes told that the intelligence did not exactly please her.

"They say the squire has sent for him to settle it," continued the boy; "a good thing for him, miss, as he hasn't got much, for a gentleman, and wants to be married—only the young lady's friends won't consent till he comes into Maywood."

"Does Mr. Lansdale live in this quarter?" The lady was bent on making out matters which she partly knew, and the country boy was keen enough to see that any news he could give would be welcome.

"Oh dear, no! he don't live here, indeed; he don't live anywhere. He is a traveller, miss, for some great house in Bradford; always on the road, don't get much for it, and can spend all. Miss Leicester—that's the young lady in Bath he is paying attentions to—wouldn't have no-

thing to do with him, they say, if it warn't for his prospects to be Squire of Maywood; but they are courting these five years and more."

"What sort of people are the Leicesters?" inquired the lady.

"Very genteel, miss; but not much to come and go on. Their father was an officer, killed in some of the wars; their mother's a widow, getting very old; there are seven sisters, and not one of them married, or like to be, but Miss Caroline: that's Mr. Lansdale's young woman—young lady, I mean; she is thought the prettiest; there aren't none of them much to look at, though they dress wonderful fine; and people say it isn't all paid for: howsoever, they'll be made up when Mr. Lansdale gets the property. Are you going to the Hall, miss?"

"I am," said the lady.

"This is the way, then;" and he followed her up the village street, to which another lane through the fields had led them. From all its doors and windows protruding heads and curious eyes looked out. Strangers were not plenty there, and there was a peculiar interest attached to this one; but she passed quickly the two rows of old but neat cottages, the church at the top, the windmill on a rising ground nearly opposite, entered the shady avenue leading to the Hall gate, and was lost to all the gazing gossips.

The Hall gate, of oak timber, with the arms of the Maywood family carved on it, was opened at her ring by a gray-headed porter from a rustic lodge all covered with ivy, hard by, and lady and boy marched up a gravel walk in the midst of a wide lawn of thick ancient sward shaded by tall evergreens, fenced in by hawthorn hedges, which must have made the place worthy of its name in the may-blossom time, washed by the rivulet which wound half round it, and backed by the massive manor-house, with an orchard on the one side of it and a shrubbery on the other. It was an old but stately mansion of its kind, built in no style at all, for different generations had altered and added to it; part belonged to the Norman times, part to the Tudor, and part to the days of Dutch William, which was said to be the most modern. Yet the whole was harmonized in a large solid house, with all sorts of turrets and chimneys, and all shapes of windows, grey with time and weather, ivied and moss-grown in the older parts, yet kept in a kind of rustic good order, as if its owners wanted for nothing substantial, and were not particular in matters of taste and fashion. As the lady approached the Hall door, which was shaded by an ample porch, a large white dog sprang out with a tremendous bark; but he was instantly followed by an elderly woman with perfectly white hair, a cap still more snowy, a black gown and white lawn handkerchief worn in the quaker fashion, with knitting-pins and an almost finished stocking in her hand. "Miss Westby, I presume," she said, dropping what our grandmothers called a lady's, not a servant's cursey.

"The same, ma'am; may I ask to whom I have the pleasure of speaking?" There was something old-fashioned in the active lady's manner, too.

"Mrs. Cotham, the superintendent of Squire Maywood's house," said the white-haired woman, with softened dignity; and the new comer took her cue in a moment, shook hands in the most friendly manner with Mrs. Cotham, assured her she was happy to make her acquaintance, and inquired kindly for the squire.

"I am sorry I can't give a better account of him than that he is much the same—still confined to his room—there is no change for the worse, I'm thankful to say. But please to come in: you must be fatigued from your long journey. I will show you your room, and dinner

will be ready as soon as you please to have it. Here, Thomas," continued the superintendent, whom other people would have called housekeeper; "take up the lady's trunk;" and a respectable-looking man-servant responded to her call, by coming round the back entrance and relieving the boy of his charge.

"Very much obliged, I am sure, miss," said the latter, as he resigned it, and pocketed the rewarding silver, which Miss Westby gave, with a kind good evening, as, followed by Mrs. Cotham, she stepped into the Hall. But why did the boy start off the same moment, like an arrow from a bow, down the gravel walk, out at the gate, through the village street, over the river ford, and all along the green lane beyond, till at the end of it, and fronting the Bath Road, he stepped into a small public-house, neat, clean, and known to all travellers by its sylvan sign of "The Hawthorn Tree?" The boy did not run so fast for nothing; the gig he had seen turn back from the uncrossable ford had made him aware that another traveller would require porter's duty to be done on his way to the Hall. It was the common lot of all Maywood visitors to stop at "The Hawthorn Tree," and find somebody to carry their travelling requisites over the ford, and, as monopolies will exist as well as necessities, the boy had made a monopoly of that business. His name was Dick Stilton, the son of a poor widow—some said a poor relative of the landlady, and servant of all work at "The Hawthorn Tree," where Dick had been in a manner brought up to hear news, to run errands, to fetch and carry everything; and so well had the boy profited by that early training, that there was not a more trusty messenger in affairs light or heavy, a more capable guide in country lanes and byways, nor a more devoted gossip within the bounds of Wiltshire. As post-boy, errand-boy, and newsmonger, Dick did his duties in a manner worthy of the famous cheese whose name he bore; witty travellers at "The Hawthorn Tree" were accustomed to say he was the Stilton, and, being determined to maintain his reputation as well as his profits, Dick never permitted one of the country boys to get a job, if any effort or ruse on his part could prevent it.

His haste had been rewarded with success on the present occasion; for within half an hour of his start from Maywood Hall door, he was crossing the slippery steps once again, laden with a hat-box, a carpet-bag, and a tin case, and preceded by the gentleman, whose private history and expectations he had unfolded to Miss Westby. In their walk through the green lane, the second traveller discovered Dick's abilities for news-telling, as the first had done; the gentleman was curious, as well as the lady: he took the first step on the ford, looked at the spot where he had seen her last, and said, "I suppose that lady, whose trunk you carried, was going to Maywood Hall?"

"Oh yes, sir," said the ready Dick: "that is Miss Westby—Miss Florence Westby they mostly call her; she is a relative to the squire, and expects to be made heiress."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Lansdale, in a tone wonderfully like that in which the lady had uttered the same phrase when informed of his prospects.

"Yes, sir," continued the youthful gossip; "and between ourselves it will be a perfect downfall to her, if the squire does make his will in her favour, as the gentle-folks say. That trunk was small enough and light enough, I can tell you, to hold a lady's things; there may be more coming after her from London; but that was all she brought with her in the fly to 'The Hawthorn Tree.' Between ourselves, sir, I don't think there is much to dress on—the Westbys is reduced gentlefolks,

you see. I heard the landlady of 'The Hawthorn Tree'—she knowed something about them when they lived in Bath—say, that since their father's death, and the settlement of his affairs, they had very little to look to, except their earnings. She got first-rate schooling, you see, and has been going out for a governess ever since she was a girl—I suppose that's a good while ago—teaching early and late, the landlady says, painting and drawing people's likenesses, making wax flowers, doing needle-work sometimes, to help her mother, and bring up her young sisters. There was three of them, not fit for much, they say—few young ladies is, sir; but they hadn't got her schooling: being the eldest, she had it before the down-come; but they are off her hand now—all married, sir, and not much to her liking. Miss Westby has a goodish bit of pride, on account of her family and education—they weren't up to that, and afraid of being old maids, it's thought; so the one married a small shop-keeper, the other a lawyer's clerk, and the third a tradesman beginning in the plumber line."

"Why didn't Miss Westby get married herself? Is she not afraid of being an old maid?" inquired the evidently amused traveller.

"They say not at all, sir; which is strange, considering that she's getting on." The landlady says it was her pride and her fine schooling that kept common people off, and gentlemen couldn't be expected where there was nothing but teaching. Howsoever, Sally Jenkins, as was their servant-maid for seven years—they never kept any but one, sir—she is on a vacation now, seeing her friends at the Limes Farm, 'cause Miss Westby has given up house, and knows the landlady of 'The Hawthorn Tree.' Well, Sally says—only it's to be kept a secret—there was a young Capt. Spencer, a son of one of the families in the West End of London, where she used to teach, paid her such attentions, and sent her such letters; but Miss Westby wouldn't have nothing to do with him, 'cause it went against his family's mind. Being high, upsetting people, they wanted him to marry somebody with a fortune, or a title; Sally says she doesn't know which they would have preferred; but it was a great heartbreak to Miss Florence, though she stood it wonderfully, and gave him up, just for good principles. 'I'll never sow discord in a family, and get a father and mother's ill will to myself,' Sally heard her say, when she and her mother were talking over it in the parlour, and Sally had something to do about the door, in course. You see the capt. had been visiting there, and the poor old lady was mightily taken on with the prospect of the fine match for her Florence. It warn't right, maybe; but it was natural for her to want the business carried on; but no—Miss Westby wouldn't—she stuck to her word, and took a solemn leave of him the next time he came, in that very parlour. Sally says the capt. was a good deal cut up; but she thinks his family would have persuaded him off the match anyhow, for he was a mighty fine gentleman—never able to make his pay settle his bills, and grand as the Spencers were, living in a West-End mansion, keeping a lot of servants, and never done going to parties, or giving them, they had but little property to follow the fashions on, and provide for two young daughters: not to speak of the mother wanting first-rate doctors every day for her nerves, and the father laid up half the year with the gout, quite as bad as Squire Maywood."

"So the captain allowed himself to be given up, but didn't break his heart, I suppose?" said Mr. Lansdale.

"Oh dear, no, though Sally says—I don't know where she was listening—that it was a very solemn thing, just like what's printed in them novels; how Miss Westby

bid him farewell, and hoped that every blessing might attend him—how the capting shook hands with her, said he bowed to her decision, but would never cease to esteem her good qualities of head and heart. Sally has it all, as pat as an old ballad, and also how she sent back his letters, and he sent back hers, for which Miss Westby's mother was never done reflecting."

"Perhaps, if Miss Westby is made heiress of Maywood Hall, the old lady may get the business patched up again;" and Mr. Lansdale looked very satirical.

"I daresay she would, sir, for the capting is not married yet—couldn't get fortune or title enough to please his family, I suppose; but old Mrs. Westby's gone. She had a long sickness—the palsy, I think—for three years and more. Sally says nobody never did such duty to a mother as Miss Florence—earning for her, nursing her, and never getting tired night nor day, though the old lady's temper and sickness together was no trifle of a trial; but maybe her kindness is going to be rewarded with the Manor of Maywood; and then, won't Sally have the first-rate situation! for Miss Westby will take her; though I don't think the squire would be right in leaving such a property to a woman—it will ruin Maywood entirely, sir." What a long-sighted cunning there was in Dick's eye. "No meeting of the county hunts at 'The Hawthorn Tree' then, I'll warrant; no grand dinners at the Hall after the run; and if the capting comes back and marries her, as in course he will, he is the very man to turn up his nose at the old manor-house, and get rid of the stock and acres at London gaming-tables. You are going to the Hall, sir?"

"Yes, did I not tell you so?"

"Well, here's the way;" and Dick conducted the second traveller, to whom his news seemed to have furnished subject of moody reflection; for he said nothing but, "A fine old place," till they got to the Hall door, at which Mrs. Cotham once more appeared with her gentlewoman's curtsey and attendant Thomas, introduced herself as the superintendent, and made the same response regarding the squire; but Dick observed that Mr. Lansdale made less friendly ceremony with her than Miss Westby had done, and the silver with which his own pains were paid was so hastily given that it fell on the porch steps.

The active errand-boy picked it up, and as he walked leisurely back to "The Hawthorn Tree"—for Dick was an old discreet boy, and never in a hurry when it was not requisite—he mused on the probable prospects of the two visitors. Dick had given each a private and honest account of the other; but in the midst of his candour and simplicity, his knowledge of the entire country's gossip made him perfectly clear on the how and why they had been sent for to the Hall. Maywood Manor, though not a large estate, was one of the oldest and most productive in Wiltshire. Local antiquaries were not agreed whether the family had taken their name from it or it from the family; but Godfrey Maywood had been knight of the shire in the first parliament for which writs were issued in English under the third Henry, and from that time till about forty years before the period of our story, the Maywoods had kept state and hospitality in their ancestral Hall, taking part in the wars of the Roses and the Commonwealth, the Restoration and the Revolution, ruling over the surrounding parish, and holding the commission of the peace. There may have been Vicars of Bray among them, to keep their hold so sure in changing times; but the facts were not mentioned in their pedigree, and the line continued unbroken and undisturbed in their ancient seat—that out-of-the-world nook with neither bridge nor high-road, though within ten miles of the gay city of Bath—till about the time

referred to, when one of its squires, having given up the family sport of fox-hunting, and taken to the more expensive amusements of the turf and the gaming-table—not to speak of living in London with his highly aristocratic lady, who would not be buried alive in Maywood Hall—died rather suddenly, leaving his estate so hopelessly embarrassed that it literally remained in the hands of the Jews, while his aristocratic lady retired to fret out her days at the country seat of a noble relative. His youngest son was sent to a cheap school, and his eldest to an appointment in the civil service in India. The boy thus exiled thought himself ill-used by his relations. Perhaps they had behaved in a niggardly manner; for though not yet of age, he had shown discretion and business abilities, and would have endeavoured to disentangle his father's affairs and redeem his family possessions, had they been willing to assist him. But some of them had families of their own, others of them remembered the good advice they had given his father, and couldn't trust the son. So he quarrelled with them all, went to India, made a wealthy match, made a fortune besides, and returned a grey-haired man and a widower without children, to pay off the Jews, re-enter Maywood Hall, and take his younger brother out of a lieutenancy in an unfashionable regiment, to be his companion and heir.

A BOOKSTALL BARGAIN.

IN strolling at leisure on a tour of observation through the streets of the metropolis, there are few things which have a more powerful attraction, and which more frequently bring us to a pause, than the various book-stalls scattered here and there in the highways and bye-ways of dense city or straggling suburb. The splendid shops with their brazen and crystal fronts are all very well in their way; but after a little familiarity with them we have sucked them dry, and their fascination ceases. Not so with the bookstall, which never wears the same face to-day that it did yesterday, but goes on changing its aspect, dingy and dusty though it be, with a variety that is ever shifting from one year's end to another; so that if you find the stall-board a dreary blank to-day, you may yet look for a capital prize to-morrow. That pleasant writer, Leigh Hunt, compassionate the unfortunate individual for whom such exciting vicissitudes possess no interest, and calls him "a man of no bookstall," pitying him, poor fellow, as he would a forlorn wretch shorn of kindred and family ties. For our part, we can quite understand the source of such compassion, having plenty of "bookstall" in our composition, and being indebted to its influence for many a curious piece of information on matters *caviare* to the mass of scribblers, and for many a rare volume which undeserved neglect has shelved into the limbo of forgetfulness.

We intend the above remarks as a preface, by way of introducing to the reader's notice one of our bookstall bargains, bought for a few pence in a back court hardly puerious to the modern breadth of crinoline, where it lay with a few other ancient tomes, in juxtaposition with a box of new potatoes ticketed 1½d. per pound, and relieved, as to the back-ground, by the sombre depth of a retail coal-shed.

Let us look at the bodily substance of our purchase of a groat, before we open it and take a peep at what it may contain of the *mens divini*—the subtle emanations of human thought and intellect.

It is a pocket volume about seven inches long by three and a half broad, and is as thick as it is wide, con-

taining not less than eleven hundred and forty pages. It is bound in substantial calf, which, bating that it is out at heels at three of the corners, is still in good serviceable condition, the neatly-woven head-bands being firm in their places. It is printed on paper of a quality as to genuineness of material such as no paper-maker pretends to produce in the present day, and which is as strong, firm, and good at this moment as it was when it came from the maker's hands two hundred years ago. What is more, it is positively better printed, both as to evenness of colour and clearness of impression than half the volumes which issue from the London press at the present time. How it came to be so well done is an interesting inquiry, and on looking at the imprint we perceive that it is the work of John Blaeu, of Amsterdam, and bears the date of 1669. Now, John Blaeu was the successor, probably the son, of William Blaeu, who was inventor of the first printing-press worthy of the name of a press, and in other respects a most remarkable man. In his boyhood he had been apprenticed in Germany to a joiner, and having served his time he rambled about the continent, as Northern artisans do, to see the world and improve his mind. In Denmark he fell in with the celebrated astronomer Tycho Brahe, who, being favourably impressed by the young man's intelligence, received him into his house and employed him in the construction of mathematical and astronomical instruments. He further gave him lessons in geography and astronomy, and taught him how to project maps and construct globes. On leaving Brahe, Blaeu went to Holland and became a dealer in books and maps, and soon took to engraving the latter himself, completing in the course of years an entire atlas, which had the credit of being the best that had been published. His success in publishing induced him to turn printer, and he was not long in acquiring the art; but he found the presses in use to be rude and inefficient implements, slow in operation and defective in result. He sat down to invent a new one, and, having formed his plan, set to work, and with his own hands made the press, which, with scarcely any alteration, was the model for all the printing-presses of Europe for nearly two centuries, down to Lord Stanhope's time. He was so delighted with his success that he made nine of the new presses, and, calling them the Nine Muses, set them up in his office.

It was in Blaeu's office, then, after it had passed into the hands of his son John, that our volume was printed. The printing was evidently conducted with great care; and we have evidence of that, not only in the excellence of the workmanship, but also in the dedication of the book, which is addressed to one Carcagni, whom John Blaeu belauds beyond the skies for virtues and magnanimities more than human, but who, in spite of his sublime attributes, contrived to escape the notice of the biographers; so that the present age knows little or nothing about him. In that dedication the printer expresses his confidence that the work proceeding from his press shall be free from the numerous errors which have disfigured it in previous editions.

And now for the volume and its author. What is the book about? and what is there worth knowing concerning the writer of it? The title-page is a handsome engraving in the then most finished style of Dutch art, representing Apollo seated on the summit of Parnassus, surrounded by the Nine Muses, his winged horse Pegasus rampant upon a peak in the back-ground. Seated at a kind of pedestal, with pen, ink, and paper before him, is a figure in classical garb, which we may suppose to represent the author, and on the front of the pedestal is inscribed the title of the book, which is

"*Ragguagli di Parnaso*" (or, Reports from Parnassus), the author being Signor Trajano Boccalini. The contents of the volume consist of no less than two hundred and fifty articles, most of them short, and none of them very long, and embracing every variety of subject connected with literature, philosophy, politics, social manners, religion, etc., etc. Apollo is supposed to have opened his court in Parnassus, and to have constituted himself judge in all these matters, and the several articles are details of what takes place in this sublime court from day to day. To this grand tribunal anybody who has a quarrel with another may appeal for decision, and get justice done him, though often in a way that he little expects. The court is open alike to the dead and the living, the Christian and the Turk, the peasant and the prince, and all in their turn are heard pleading their own cause. The book is written in choice Italian, the style being pure, musical, and sonorous, but abounding in what was thought an excellence in Boccalini's days, but is voted a nuisance in ours, that is to say, in periods so long that no human lungs could utter them in a breath, and often extending through an entire page of the small print. The writer has at his command not only a most fluent and vigorous pen, but a store of wit at will, not always of a kind which would be much relished among ourselves, as it is often coarse, scurrilous, and unfeeling. With such comprehensive scope for his powers as his plan afforded, and with such powers to exercise, it is no wonder that his work created a grand sensation throughout the Italian world of thought, and among people of ambitions—literary and other—who found themselves weighed and measured by so little scrupulous a judge. The work sold rapidly, and was printed again and again—owing, perhaps, quite as much of its success to the spiteful element it contained as to its undeniable literary merit. In justice to the author, however, it should be remembered that the course he pursued was perfectly allowable in his time. Then the common courtesies of life had not penetrated into the literary walk, and men gave loose in print to language which they would not dream of uttering by word of mouth. Even at a later time, our own Milton ran riot in as bad, or even a worse vein, and yet among his contemporaries no one called him to account for it; so that we must not judge Boccalini by a standard of which he could have had no conception when he wrote.

There could hardly have been a man of any note, either in literature or politics, in Italy, who was not introduced to his imaginary court of Apollo by this vivacious writer. Some of them, it is clear, got sufficiently rough treatment, and must have smarted for many a year under his lacerating goad, while others are altogether as kindly handled and soothed with rounded periods of most eloquent praise. In politics and on matters of government he, for reasons which may be conceived, only generalizes, but his observations are those of a severe critic, and are invariably based on pure morality, in marked opposition and contrast to those of Machiavelli, whom, by the way, he represents Apollo as indignantly kicking out of Parnassus, and towards whose pernicious precepts he takes occasion to manifest his hatred from time to time. In religion he is a Catholic, and a faithful son of the church; and one of his longest and most masterly essays is an elaborate oration against heresy and uncatholicity, which he whimsically puts into the mouth of a Turk cited before the court as a witness.

It is hardly possible to give an adequate idea of the wit and humour which are expressed in one language, by translating the mere words into another: in all such attempts the subtle allusions, which are the life and spirit

of some passages, are almost sure to evade us, while the comical play upon words, which form the charm of others, must of necessity be despaired of. From this cause, the best things of a brilliant writer will always remain the exclusive property of his compatriots, and performances which, in their native garb, will convulse a reader with laughter, are sometimes found dull and pithless in a foreign dress. We shall attempt, therefore, but one brief *morceau* from Boccacini, and in the choice of that we are guided by what is practicable rather than by what is best; it will serve, however, to give the reader some idea of what the man was in one of his jocular moods, and with what rockless unreserve he boldly declared his opinion of an author of whom all Italy was proud. Here is the passage—

"A Laconic Litterateur, who has been guilty of not using due brevity, is severely punished by the Senate."

"That unfortunate disciple of the Laconic school, who was convicted of the capital offence of using four words to express an idea which might have been expressed in three, was, five days ago, brought up for judgment, after solitary imprisonment for eight months. As a punishment for his crime, the Laconic Senate condemned him to read through the whole of the 'War of Pisa,' written by Francesco Guicciardini. The unhappy man betook himself to the task of expiation, and with unutterable toil and mortal sweat got through the first chapter; but so horrible were his sufferings in this desperate undertaking, that he flew in despair to the judges who had condemned him, and, casting himself at their feet, besought with groans the infliction of capital punishment. Would they mercifully chain him to an oar for life? Would they graciously brick him up in the solid substance of a wall? Would they considerately condescend to skin him alive? Anything rather than a weary death by interminable paragraphs which led to nothing, and rapid conceits, which were more agonizing to his nerves than the blows of the executioner—sharper to the mind than English cutlery to the flesh, and which surpassed in their slow tortures all the refinements of cruelty ever invented by tyrants."

This is pretty well for a sarcastic estimate of the style of the great Italian historian, who was the favourite of Charles v; sharp as it is, however, it is by no means undeserved, for of all the writers who ever preferred beating about the bush, and indulging in profitless conceits when he should be coming to the point, Guicciardini is certainly one of the least tolerable.

In deciding on matters of war and politics, which were then the current news of the day, but are now the events of history, Boccacini's judgments by the mouth of Apollo are just what might be expected from a sound and earnest Roman Catholic. So far from blaming the Duke of Alba for the execution of Counts Egmont and Horn, he regards that act as one of necessity, and vindicates the duke, in the presence of Philip II, against all charges brought against him by his enemies for his despotic government in Flanders. On the other hand, where his religion, or the interests of the papal sovereignty, are not concerned, every maxim he utters is an example of combined wisdom and morality; and such maxims abound throughout the volume, being culled profusely from the sagest writers of ancient and modern times.

But our limits warn us that we must lay down the volume—albeit few things are more certain than that the reader will never see it in his native tongue—and say something concerning the author. That part of our task is but brief; for all that is remembered of the life of

Signor Trajano Boccacini may be told in very few words. He was born at Loretto, in the year 1556. As a youth he had but few advantages, his parents being poor; and it was not until he had reached a mature age that he was enabled to commence his studies. He made, however, most rapid progress, and his earliest compositions, which were poems, gave the greatest promise of future literary renown. Ere long, his genius became acknowledged, and his extraordinary versatility and humour ranked him among the wittiest writers of his age. He was surrounded by friends and admirers, and his society was courted by the wealthy and the learned, who loved him as much for his gentleness and benevolence as they revered him for his genius. But for his outspoken scorn of political chicane and tergiversation, and the covert satire which flowed from his pen, he might perhaps have attained to the highest distinctions and dignities; but these qualities ultimately gave offence to his patrons, and so far endangered his safety that he was compelled to quit Rome secretly and repair to Venice. It was at Venice that he published the "Ragguagli di Parnaso," which is by far the best of his prose works, and which met with the greatest success. Besides numerous poetical works of a satirical kind, he wrote, in Latin, commentaries on the "Annals" of Tacitus, and on the first book of the "Histories" of Agricola. Tacitus he seems to have ardently admired, and in his "Ragguagli" quotes him repeatedly, and defends him more than once, at considerable length, against the assaults of the critics. Boccacini's finest satire is "La Pietra di Paragone," in which he gives vent to his wrath and indignation against the Spanish misrule in Italy. This work appears to have been his last. In it he gave mortal offence to the governing powers, who, wanting the wit to repay him in his own coin, or the honesty and humanity to reform the cruel abuses he exposed, chose to revenge themselves upon the author by means of the assassin's dagger. Poor Trajano Boccacini, learned, witty, and wise, and the scourge of false pretensions in all shapes, and of Spanish tyranny in particular, was found murdered in a street in Venice, on the 16th of November 1613.

LIGHTHOUSES.

No part of our maritime arrangements is more admirable than the provision made for lighting the coasts, whether we consider the number or the brilliance of the lights displayed. Many a time around the shores on dark, hazy nights, has the cry of "Light ahead" from the lookout relieved the mind of the master mariner, in some ill-furnished schooner, dubious respecting his position, with the wind getting up, and the vessel running fast through the water. The friendly gleam has in a moment terminated suspense, by appearing as indicated on his chart, and expected from his reckoning. The number of these important guides to the seaman on the British coasts is above three hundred, about forty of which are floating lights. In addition, there are seven lighthouses around the Isle of Man. The general lights are for vessels at sea, and the local for harbours, managed by corporations or local trustees. The floating lights are vessels strongly moored over sandbanks, or in situations where no solid structure can be reared. Each vessel, fitted complete, with lantern and lighting apparatus, costs on an average nearly £5000; and the annual expense of maintaining it, including wages and victualling of the crew, eleven in number, is £1000. The first example of a floating light on our coasts was that at the Nore, established in the year 1734. The greatest depth of water

in which any of these vessels at present ride, is about forty fathoms, as the one at the station of the "Seven Stones," between the Scilly Islands and Cornwall.

The lights on land, or lighthouses, which are at the highest elevation, with the distances they command in clear weather, are given in the following table, compiled from the general return published by the Admiralty:—

	Year erected.	Height of lantern above high water.	Distances at which the lights are seen.
Lizard . . .	1751	224 feet	20 miles
Needles . . .	1786	469 "	27 "
Beachy Head . .	1828	285 "	22 "
South Foreland .	1793	372 "	25 "
Cromer . . .	1719	274 "	22 "
Flamborough Head	1806	214 "	19 "
Inchkeith . . .	1804	220 "	18 "
Isle of May . .	1816	240 "	21 "
Dunnet Head . .	1831	346 "	23 "
Sumburgh Head .	1821	300 "	22 "
Cape Wrath . .	1828	400 "	25 "
Barra Head . .	1833	680 "	32 "
Kintyre . . .	1787	297 "	22 "
Mull of Galloway	1830	325 "	23 "
Calb of Man . .	1818	375 "	22 "
St. Bee's Head .	1718	333 "	23 "
Lundy Island . .	1820	540 "	30 "
Cape Clear . .	1817	455 "	27 "
Clare Island . .	1806	349 "	27 "
Skellig's Rock .	1826	372 "	25 "

The details of the erection of lighthouses in difficult situations, as on lonely rocks far out at sea, washed over by every tide, are of a very striking nature. Events occur of an exciting kind, which cannot happen in connection with other buildings. Often has the labour of a year been destroyed by the storm of a few hours. The history of the Eddystone is a tragical nautical record.

The lighthouse stands on the principal of a group of rocks, bare at low, covered at high water, which has perhaps been called after the whirl or eddy caused by the water striking against it—*eddy-stone*. The site is in the Channel, about fourteen miles south by west of Plymouth, and nine miles from the nearest point of land, the Ram Head, on the coast of Cornwall. Many a goodly vessel, after a safe voyage across the Atlantic, had gone to pieces on this hidden source of danger, rendering it peculiarly important to indicate the perilous spot by establishing a warning light. This was a remarkably difficult enterprise, from the nature of the situation. But a Mr. Winstanley, an amateur engineer, had the boldness to think himself equal to the task, and commenced it in the year 1696. It was finished in four years, and appears to have received a form directly adapted to secure its destruction by a heavy sea. In little more than three years it perished, and the architect shared its fate. He was in the building, superintending some repairs, when the tempest known in our annals as the "Great Storm" came on, November 26, 1703. The next morning not a vestige of the lighthouse was to be seen. It was afterwards found that the waves had so completely torn up the structure from the very foundation, and carried it away, that not a beam, stone, or iron-bar remained upon the rock. The only article left was a piece of iron chain, wedged in a cleft, which was cut out about half a century afterwards.

The want of a lighthouse on the Eddystone soon led to a melancholy accident, for before another appeared, the "Winchelsea" man-of-war was wrecked on the rock, and most of the crew perished. A new one was commenced in July, 1706, under the direction of Mr. John Rudyerd, of London. Like his predecessor, he was not brought up to the profession of an engineer, but was engaged in trade as a silk-mercator on Ludgate Hill. He had, however, great mechanical talent, and conducted his performance in a masterly manner, avoiding the errors of the former structure. He made it circular instead of

polygonal, rejected all projecting ornaments, and directed his attention specially to the formation of a tower which should offer the least resistance to the waves. The height of the tower, which was constructed of timber, was ninety-two feet, including the lantern; and the diameter of the base, at the level of high-water, twenty-three feet. In July, 1708, the new light was first shown. It continued to be regularly exhibited for forty-seven years, or till 1755, when the whole fabric was destroyed by accidental fire. But for this circumstance, it is supposed that it would have defied the ocean and the atmosphere for centuries, owing to the simplicity of its form and the skill with which it was framed and fastened to the rock.

No event could well be more terrible to the three light-keepers, in the midst of the swollen ocean, miles away from land, than the firing of their dwelling. It seemed to expose them to the inevitable fate of perishing in the flames or in the deep. The leading features of the catastrophe have been related by Smeaton. All was safe at the commencement of a dark night on the 1st of December, 1755; but about two o'clock the next morning, Henry Hall, the light-keeper on the watch, an old man, went into the lantern, as usual, to snuff the candles, and found it full of smoke. Flames broke out as soon as he opened the door, caused by the draught. The man immediately alarmed his two companions; but, being asleep in bed, it was some time before they came to his assistance. Meanwhile, he did his utmost to extinguish the fire by using a tub of water, which was always kept in the upper room; but as it was burning some yards above his head, the endeavours were unavailing. At last some melted lead from the roof came down upon his head and shoulders, and he was seized with violent internal pains, as if a portion of the molten lead had got down his throat while he was looking up at the lantern. His comrades, when they arrived, could render little help, as the supply of water was exhausted, and none could be obtained without descending and returning the height of seventy feet. The men had no alternative but to retreat lower as the fire descended, till they came to the lowest room. From this they were finally driven, and took refuge in a hole of the rock, as it was, happily, by that time low water. With the utmost difficulty, about two o'clock they were rescued from their perilous position by a boat from the shore, for the sea ran high, and the men were half stupified. Old Hall persisted in believing that some of the lead had run down his throat when it fell upon him from the roof; but every one considered this the result of a terrified imagination. He had medical advice, lingered twelve days after the fire, and upon his body being opened, there was actually found a flat oval piece of lead in the stomach, weighing seven ounces and five drachms. His extraordinary case is related at length in the forty-ninth volume of the "Philosophical Transactions."

No time was permitted to elapse before active measures were taken to rear a third lighthouse—the one at present on the rock. This is of stone, the material advised by Smeaton, who had the direction of the undertaking; and he adopted a form for the building, which combines the two great principles of strength and weight, or *cohesion* and *inertia*. The form is circular, decreasing in circumference from the base up to a certain height, like the trunk of an oak, from which the idea was taken. The first stone was laid on the 12th of June, 1756, and the last on the 24th of August, 1759. Up to the height of twelve feet the tower is a solid mass of masonry, the stones of which are united by means of stone joggles, dove-tailed joints, and oaken trenails. It rises to the

height of sixty-eight feet, and has a diameter of twenty-five feet at the base. The whole was completed without the loss of life or limb to any one concerned in it, or accident by which the work was materially delayed; and as it has stood ever since, so it promises to stand for centuries. The Eddystone is a noble monument to the memory of John Smeaton, who was born at Ansthorpe, in Yorkshire, in the former part of the last century. He commenced life as an attorney's clerk, then followed the business of a mathematical instrument maker in London, and finally adopted the calling of a civil engineer. He may, in fact, be said to have created that profession. Under his auspices, the first association of civil engineers for mutual counsel and improvement was established at the "Queen's Head," Holborn, in 1771. Upon the dissolution of this body, through some misunderstanding, another was organized, of which Smeaton became a member; but he died before the first meeting, which was held on the 15th of April, 1793. This society continues to exist under the name of the Smeatonian Society of Civil Engineers, meeting during the session of Parliament at the "Freemasons' Tavern."

Long was the Inch Cape Reef, or Bell Rock, a terror to mariners on the east coast of Scotland, well known to the earliest navigators, lying directly in the fair-way to the firths of Forth and Tay. The abbots of Aberbrothwick, from which it is distant about twelve miles, caused a float to be fixed to the spot, with a large bell attached, so that the swinging motion of the waves should cause it continually to toll, especially in rough weather. This expedient, upon which Southey's ballad of "Sir Ralph the Rover" is founded, originated the name of the rock. It met with little success. Many melancholy shipwrecks occurred; among others, that of the "York," a seventy-four, which was lost with all her crew. The Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses determined to construct a tower of masonry, on the principle of the Eddystone, and appointed Mr. Robert Stevenson to conduct the work. He landed with his labourers on the 17th of August, 1807; but owing to the rock being covered to the depth of twelve feet by the tide, only a very short time could be secured for labour between the ebb and flow. On one occasion the engineer, with thirty-two workmen, had a very narrow escape from being drowned, by the tide rising before a boat came to their assistance, when their own vessel had broken adrift. While in a state of intense anxiety he attempted to address the men, but could not utter a word. "I now learned," says he, "by experience, that the saliva is as necessary as the tongue itself to speech." Scarcely had he stooped to moisten his mouth with the sea-water in a little pool on the rock, than the welcome cry was heard from one of the apparently doomed party, "A boat! a boat!" The tower was completed in October, 1810. This is a hundred feet in height, forty-two feet in diameter at the base, and fifteen at the top. It contains six rooms, and has two large bells for tolling in foggy weather.

PHAROS loquitur.

"Far in the bosom of the deep,
O'er these wild shelves my watch I keep,
A ruddy gem of changeful light
Bound on the dusky brow of night.
The seaman bids my lustre hail,
And scorns to strike his timorous sail."

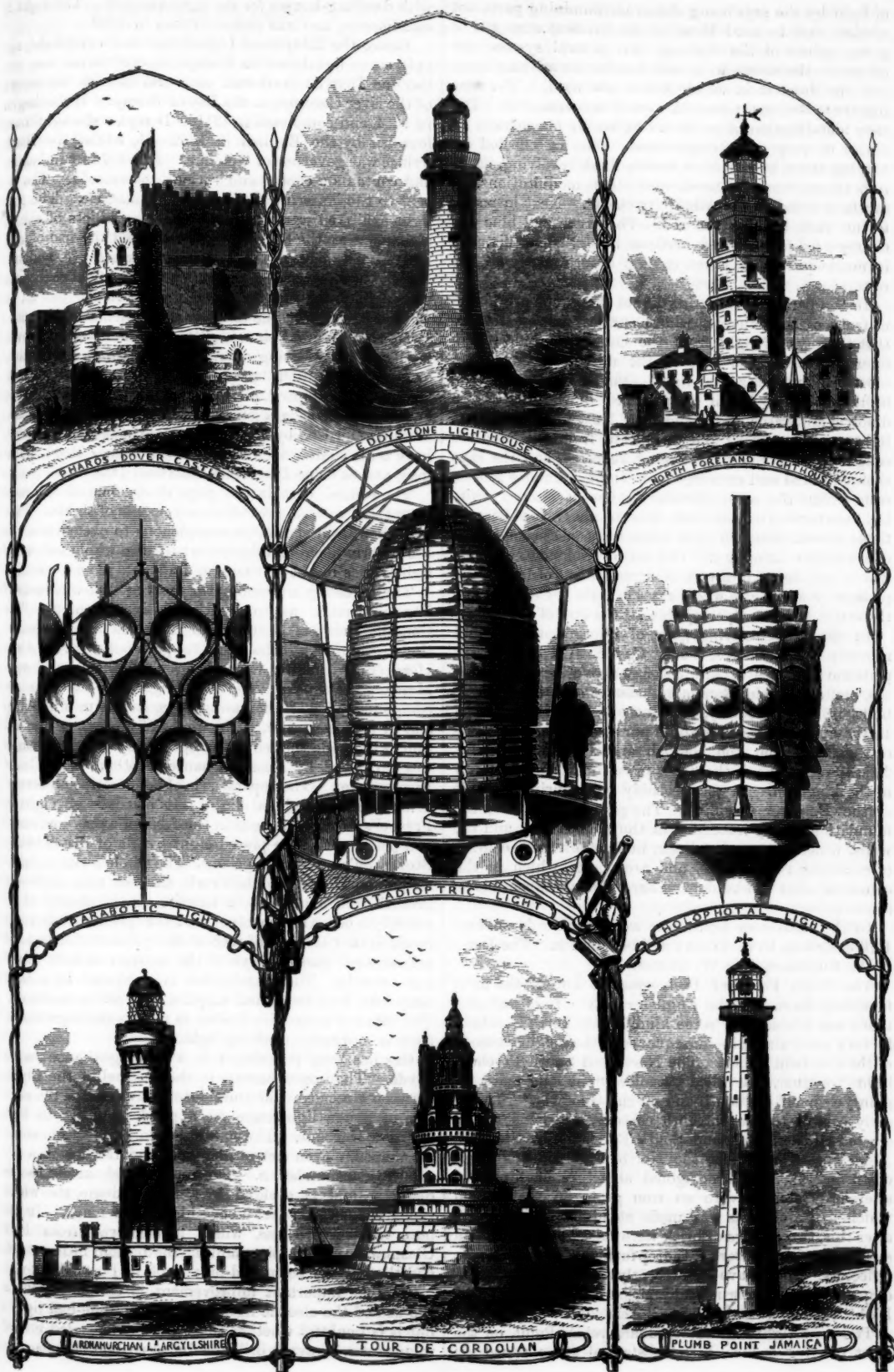
These lines were written in the album of the Bell Rock Lighthouse by Sir Walter Scott, upon a visit in the year 1814.

The Skerryvore Lighthouse—the boldest work of its class—involved immense difficulties and constant perils in its erection. It stands on the main nucleus of a long

reef of rocks, over which the Atlantic dashes with tremendous fury, at the distance of about twelve miles from the seaward point of the island of Tyree, in Argyllshire, and close to the track of the shipping of Liverpool and the Clyde. The particular spot selected is compact gneiss, worn smooth as glass by the action of the water; and being of small extent, the blasting of the rock for the foundation of the tower, without any shelter from the risk of flying splinters, was attended with great hazard. Mr. Alan Stevenson, the engineer, commenced operations in the summer of 1838, by erecting a temporary barrack on piles, raised so high as to be ordinarily beyond the reach of the ocean. This was for the accommodation of the men at night, saving them the voyage to and from the shore, and also at those times when stormy weather suspended labour. The first erection was swept away in a great gale on the night of November 3rd; but work for the season was then over, so that there were no occupants. A second barrack stood firm, and a more remarkable inhabited house it is impossible to conceive.

"Perched," says the architect, "forty feet above the wave-beaten rock, in this singular abode the writer, with a goodly company of thirty men, has spent many a weary day and night at those times when the sea prevented any one going down to the rock, anxiously looking for supplies from the shore, and earnestly longing for a change of weather favourable to the recommencement of the works. For miles around nothing could be seen but white foaming breakers, and nothing heard but howling winds and lashing waves. At such seasons much of our time was spent in bed; for there alone we had effectual shelter from the winds and the spray, which searched every cranny in the walls of the barrack. Our slumbers, too, were at times fearfully disturbed by the sudden pouring of the sea over the roof, the rocking of the house on its pillars, and the spouting of water through the seams of the doors and windows: symptoms which, to one suddenly aroused from strong sleep, recalled the appalling fate of the former barrack, which had been engulfed in the foam at twenty yards from our dwelling, and for a moment seemed to summon us to a similar fate. On two occasions in particular, those sensations were so vivid as to cause almost every one to spring out of bed." Well may the engineer add, "The close of the work was welcomed with thankfulness by all engaged in it, and our remarkable preservation was viewed, even by many of the most thoughtless, as in a peculiar manner the gracious work of Him by whom 'the very hairs of our head are all numbered.'" The Skerryvore Tower is 138 feet high, 42 feet in diameter at the base, and 16 at the top. It contains a mass of masonry more than double that of the Bell Rock, and not much less than five times that of the Eddystone.

Long after lighthouses of great magnitude were erected, the means of illumination were very imperfect. At first, at the North Foreland, an iron grate was placed at the top, quite open to the air, in which a good fire of coals was kept blazing. This was afterwards covered with a lantern, as a shelter from rain, fitted with large sash windows, and the fire was kept bright by bellows, which the attendants blew throughout the night. For about forty years after its erection, the tower of the Eddystone shed only the light derived from a few miserable tallow candles; and so recently as the year 1816, the Isle of May light, in the Firth of Forth, was a fire of coals. Spermaceti oil in argand burners has been generally employed during the present century; but this is now superseded by colza oil, expressed from the seed of a wild species of cabbage. In order to prevent the waste



of light by the rays being scattered, illumining parts not needed, and to send them in the greatest strength to given points of the horizon, two general systems are adopted—the catoptric, in which reflectors are employed, and the dioptric in which lenses are used. The lens lights are the most powerful, as well as economical. The easy identification of particular lights by mariners is an object of very great importance. This is effected by varying them, as into fixed, double-fixed, revolving, flashing, intermittent, coloured, and other modifications, all carefully noted on the Admiralty charts. Next in power to the white light is the red. The green and blue are chiefly used for pier and harbour lights, where distance is not required, as these colours absorb nearly all the rays.

In the parabolic reflecting lights the lamps are placed in front of the mirrors, whose surfaces are so formed that the rays of light from the lamps are reflected in lines parallel to the axes of the mirrors, producing a most brilliant horizontal light. The dioptric system of light consists of an oil lamp placed in the centre of a dioptric apparatus of prisms and lenses. The rays of light passing upward and downward from the lamp are caught by the prisms, refracted, reflected, and the rays then collected and converged on eight immense lenses, from which the most glorious flashes of intense white light are thrown continuously into the air. At a distance these several shafts of light appear to coalesce and form one sun-like luminary. The term “holophotal,” (ὅλη, whole, φῶς, light,) indicates an arrangement of lenses and prisms by which the whole mass of light is collected and thrown out without perceptible loss of any of the rays.

In the accompanying page of illustrations the first represents the Pharos, Dover Castle. On the eastern platform of the castle hill, 550 feet above the level of the sea, stands the old Roman lighthouse and watch-tower, built, in all probability, to point out the site of Dover Harbour, and the course to be pursued by the adventurous galleys from the Gaulish and Phœnician coasts. This tower is one of the finest pieces of Roman masonry in the kingdom. It was probably built during the rule of the Emperor Claudius. The plan is octagonal; the foundation deeply imbedded in the chalk rock; and the walls, which are ten feet thick, built of alternate courses of coral rag, rubble, tiles, and a concrete, which in the course of ages has become as hard and indestructible as a quartz rock.

Of the Eddystone lighthouse we have already spoken. Full details as to its history will be found in “The Lives of the Engineers,” by W. Smiles.

The North Foreland Lighthouse is one of the most familiarly known on the English coasts. It is probable there was a beacon of some kind at the North Foreland in very early times, in consequence of the neighbourhood of the Goodwin Sands. The North and South Foreland lights together, are called by sailors “the long mark for going clear off the south and off the Goodwin.” In the early part of the seventeenth century, lighthouses were erected on the North and South Forelands by Sir John Meldrum. The one at the North Foreland was burnt down in 1683. An octagonal structure of flint was afterwards erected with an iron grate on the top, in which a fire of coals was made at night. Sixty years after this, two storeys of brick were raised on the original structure, with a lantern at the top furnished with parabolic reflectors. These have been recently superseded by a catadioptric light, constructed by Messrs. Wilkins and Co., Lighthouse Engineers, of Long Acra.

The new lighthouse at Ardnamurchan Point, on the coast of Argyleshire, is a substantial stone structure,

with dwelling-houses for the light-keepers. The light is catadioptric, and was first exhibited in 1849.

Before the Eddystone Lighthouse was completed, the only stone lighthouse in Europe, erected out at sea, was the fine Tour de Cordouan, on a flat rock at the mouth of the river Garonne, in the Bay of Biscay. It was begun in 1584, and completed in 1611. It replaced a lighthouse founded by the English in 1362–71, whilst the Black Prince was governor of Guienne. It is 197 feet in height, and contains a chapel and various apartments. The ascent to the lantern is by a spacious staircase. The first light exhibited was obtained by burning billets of oak, in a chauffer at the top of the tower; and the use of coal instead of wood was the first improvement. A rude reflector was afterwards added; then paraboloidal reflectors; and in 1822, the light received its last improvement, by the introduction of the dioptric instruments of Fresnel.

In the Plumb Point Lighthouse, Jamaica, the tower is of cast iron, resting upon a massive stone foundation, and is surmounted by an octagon gun-metal lantern. The light is catoptric, of twenty-four parabolic reflectors, and is visible at a distance of twenty miles. Messrs. Wilkins and Co., by whom this lighthouse was erected, have built similar ones on the Great Isaac's Rock, Bahamas, and at Cape Pembroke, Falkland Island.

The central cuts in the page show some of the most recent and most approved arrangements of lights. They are taken from specimens conspicuous to every visitor in the International Exhibition, where the whole subject of lighthouses might be easily and advantageously studied.

The following are among the most notable incidents of late occurrence as to lighthouse improvement. The Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses are engaged in the erection of a lighthouse on the promontory of St. Ab's Head, Berwickshire, from designs of their engineers, Messrs. Stevenson. The buildings and lantern are completed. The illuminating apparatus is now fitted up and in working order, at the works of Messrs. Milne and Son, who made the whole, except the optical part, which was furnished by Messrs. Chance Brothers and Co., of Birmingham. The apparatus is of the description termed a first-class holophotal light. It consists of eight of Fresnel's lenses, arranged in the form of a polygon, above and below which are placed eight panels of Mr. Thomas Stevenson's holophotal prisms. The whole forms a gigantic polygonal cage of glasswork, six feet nine inches in breadth, and nine feet in height. It is caused to revolve by a powerful machine; and the speed is duly regulated, so that the axis of each of the systems of lenses and prisms shall pass the eye of the mariner at intervals of ten seconds. The illumination is produced by a large lamp with four wicks, and supplied with oil by clockwork. The effect of successive flashes is readily distinguishable from an ordinary revolving light.

Gas has been introduced in a new lighthouse on the Clyde. The improvements in the channel of the Clyde, between Greenock and Dumbarton, have caused the erection of a new lighthouse on a perch opposite to Port Glasgow Harbour. The new lighthouse is of iron, circular shaped, eleven feet in diameter, and resting on a circular ashlar foundation. The lantern is about six feet in diameter, and is covered by a copper dome, the whole rising about thirty feet above high-water mark. It has been lighted with gas, which is conveyed from Port Glasgow through a pipe sunk at the bottom of the river, and the gas can be turned on and off in Port Glasgow.

Another important improvement is contemplated in the use of the electric light, and of the lime-ball light; but it is doubtful whether these can be depended on for regular use, however brilliant for occasional signals.

LEDESDALE GRANGE.

A TALE OF COAL-FIELDS AND CORN-FIELDS.

CHAPTER XXVII.—UNRAVELLING.

MEANWHILE Mr. Rivers left The Grange much more confused than when he entered it. He looked again for Mrs. Purden to unravel something for him, but she had got enough for the present, and would not appear again. To the condoling expressions of the sceptic outside, he answered, "The worst of it is, I have got nothing for my pains, except, indeed, a very agreeable impression of my new friend."

"Trying to thrust a man out of his own identity! Monstrous!" Mr. Lucas muttered to himself, as he watched the retreating figure of the vicar; then thinking that he might at least have been more sympathetic on the subject, he went to make his peace indoors. But light was thrown on the matter, and that speedily, to a degree that made the sagacious Mr. Lucas feel rather small, and hope people had forgotten some part of what he said—that made the good folks of Ledesdale open their eyes, and blink them again as if dazzled by the illumination—that caused, in short, a sensation such as had not been known since Ledesdale had forgotten the verdure of its early days, and had become the smoky, not to say the ugly Ledesdale it then was. When Mrs. Cameron first appeared in public with her son—yes, her son, in spite of the "unromantic age"—people turned out of their doorways to look after them, and some mothers who had children in a death club looked more kindly on them than they had done for a long time previously.

"Scenes" are not much in fashion now, at least not in print: it is generally admitted that tears and embraces, swoons and hysterics, are best left to the imagination; but there were several "scenes" at The Grange before the desired light had poured in sufficiently. There was a scene the night after Mr. Rivers' examination, when Mr. Lucas first owned that there "seemed less humbug about it than he had thought." More scenes, when letters arrived in answer to letters sent, and proved satisfactory. And then there was the great scene of all, when the servants at The Grange listened outside the parlour door and wept over their aprons from sheer sympathy. And now comes the natural question, How did it all happen? For certainly the position of mother and son, with reference to each other, had neither been a common nor a comfortable position. One or two brief extracts from letters written at this time upon the subject, may serve to make a long story short, and give the desired information.

"I told you before," wrote Mrs. Purden to Mr. Rivers, "that the little money my aunt possessed, being settled on herself and on her child after her, it was not in the husband's power to touch one penny without her full permission. She did, however, continue to pay his debts till she felt that by so doing she was robbing her own son, and declined doing so any more. Her husband took the refusal very quietly, was as kind to the child as he had ever been, and, on the plea of his appearing delicate, offered to accompany him on a short excursion, at a time when my aunt was tied to her home by other duties. In two or three days came a letter, stating that the child had been sickening with scarlet fever when he left home, and that, unless she arrived immediately, she could never see him alive. In the agitation of his mind, no date was put to this letter by the writer; and the poor mother, after making every inquiry in the town which gave its post-mark, returned distracted to her own home to find her husband there before her, and to learn

that the child was dead. For some time after this, he got her money at his pleasure; then, on the repeated solicitations of her friends, she refused to be longer answerable for his debts, and came to reside at my father's house. The husband was thrown into prison, where he died of fever, and in his ravings said many things which convinced bystanders that his child was still living. The shock of her husband's death was too much for my aunt, who from that time considered herself his murderer; and this, joined to the impossibility of now obtaining a clue to the child's discovery, produced the fearfully morbid state of mind to which she was a prey for many years. Perhaps you can now understand the reason why your voice sounded so painfully familiar in her ears; why your exact outward resemblance to the 'stern grim-featured man' of your childish remembrance should have so forcibly impressed her."

"Since you are aware," wrote the gentleman at whose house Mr. Rivers had resided when a boy, and who had been answerable for his education, "of what it never was my design to have informed you, viz., that you are not related to me in the way you had supposed, I may now state that I first adopted you principally out of compassion to some very poor and worthy people, on whom you had been palmed off on false pretences. The gentleman who left you in their charge, and whose promised 'quarterly allowance' never arrived, gave his name as Smith. I fear, therefore, that from the name much cannot be gathered; but a son of the people I speak of is living, and ready to come forward when called for."

He did come forward, and so did a brother of Mr. Cameron's, who, though he had not known all, had known more than he cared to speak of; and, without the aid of that invaluable "mole under the left ear," or "scar on the right cheek," generally deemed essential to identification, the relationship was established beyond all controversy, and the most sceptical were satisfied. Leaving the party at The Grange to arrange its ideas, thus suddenly disorganized, as best it could, it will be necessary to turn to another party, also somewhat thrown off its balance, though from different causes.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Gold! gold! gold! gold! bright and yellow, hard and cold,
Molten, graven, hammer'd and roll'd; heavy to get, and light to hold;
How widely its agencies vary!
To save, to ruin, to curse, to bless; as even its minted coins express,
Now stamped with the image of good Queen Bess,
And now, with Bloody Mary!"

THE cholera being, as was said, respecter of neither place nor person, had found its way even to the big house at Burnt-hollow. But it had only found menials there to meet it; and therefore, though a housemaid died, and a foot-boy was incapacitated from work many months after the attack itself had passed away, no great sensation was occasioned, and no very profound interest manifested in consequence. The family were at Llandudno, where they kept a kind of summer seat, letting it out during the winter months. They had prolonged their stay this year on account of the "pestilence."

"Not that I fear for myself," said Mrs. Armitage; "but of course the health of the dear girls was my chief consideration."

"Quite right indeed," responded Miss Bell, who was with them.

"I am sure, mamma, we were not afraid," said Nelly, looking up with kindling eyes; "and I hate the thoughts of having run away from our own place just when we ought to have stopped and tried to help others a little"—an amiable sentiment in the child, which her mother and cousin could afford to smile at.

Mr. Armittage had his meals at the works during their absence, and when he joined them on Saturday nights had to report progress.

"Very bad, my love, and every fear that it will be much worse," was the announcement for some time. "Hudson, you will regret to hear, is dead, and two of his children."

"Dear me, how sad! Of cholera, I suppose?"

"Yes, or something else—in fact, I heard no particulars, and asked for none. I could wish, Mary Ann—but *this* only between ourselves—that cholera was the worst sign of the times."

"Well, my dear," was the reply of his affectionate partner, "we have weathered the storm before now, and must hope to do so again."

"Pardon may look out for squalls," was the next observation.

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Armittage; "any likelihood of his failing?"

"Failing!" echoed her husband, with a vulgar laugh, "rather so! He'll pay a shilling in the pound before this year's up, or I'm no true prophet. He's been going ahead lately, and isn't quite as knowing as he thinks himself. But oh, he'll be all right again soon enough, and he'll learn a bit of a lesson." The condescension of manner with which this remark was made was delightful to observe. Mr. Armittage might have heard of "failures" as matters of report, ugly businesses, in which some of his brothers in the iron trade were unhappily involved, but having no connection in the world with him.

He was breaking his second egg at the Llandudno breakfast-table one Monday morning when the letters were brought in; Mr. Armittage was in no hurry to read the one addressed to himself; he finished some playful bantering he was indulging in with Miss Bell, before he opened the envelope, and then his wife, albeit not versed in reading the countenance, perceived that "something was up." She was about to assert the wife-like privilege of reading over his shoulder, but he pushed her back with a gesture considerably less polite than emphatic. "Will you, Mary Ann, not—" he had begun, then, remembering the presence of Miss Bell he added, with a forced laugh, "Things are coming to a pretty pass, when ladies wish to be as wise in business matters as the rightful parties concerned; take my advice, girls," looking at Miss Bell, who was not a girl, "and let your husbands mind their own concerns without seeking to pry into them: it only irritates them, and does you no good."

"I think," said his wife, half crying with mortification, "when a letter makes you look like that, it is time to pry;" a speech not evincing much of the tact for which the sex is justly distinguished, and for which she was rewarded with a scowl from her husband, as he left the room, intended for her private benefit, which made her poor heart quake, and her eyes fill many times during the day. There was, however, no time for explanation; Mr. Armittage, instead of waiting for the evening train, as he had intended, was off at once to catch the express, and in spite of her anxiety she was too sulky and too deeply offended to seek an interview.

"The Lockbarton post-mark," said Mrs. Armittage, examining the envelope, which had fallen under the table after her husband's departure; "and with 'Immediate' on it, but in quite a strange hand."

"Most of papa's correspondents would have hands strange to us, I should think," replied her elder daughter, who was rather a flippant young lady; "so we need hardly distress ourselves on that score."

"I should think," said the mother, with a sudden pang of apprehension, "it could never be anything about Edward?"

"Mamma! with a Lockbarton post-mark and he in London; besides, papa did not look like that, he only looked—" and the young lady, who had never very practically learned her duty of any sort or description, imitated her father's look and manner with considerable effect, only her younger sister looked at her reproachfully. "Let us task ourselves no more on the matter," said Miss Armittage, taking up the last book from the circulating library. The other ladies went out, as they affirmed, to get an appetite for the early sea-side dinner.

The express went at a quick rate enough—too rapid for several ladies inside, who were afflicted with weak nerves, or who would fain have admired the landscape, now jumbled up rather confusedly; but not near as fast as Mr. Armittage could have desired to go; and he occasionally moved his feet about restlessly in the carriage.

"Seen the paper to-day, sir?" inquired one of those middle aged gentlemen whose placid countenances proclaim the inward serenity of their minds.

"Thank you," said Mr. Armittage, who felt far too impatient to think much of any tidings that did not concern himself. "Anything of importance in it?"

"Very important to all interested in the firm of Flounders and Son, who have stopped payment, it appears."

"Ah, so I understand," said Mr. Armittage.

"Rather a shock that to the Grubbleston Bank, or I'm mistaken," continued the communicative gentleman; "and if *that* goes, there are a good many in the iron trade who will shake in their shoes."

"Ha! indeed; yes, I should say so," said the iron-master, wishing his tormentor far enough, but assuming a look of profound attention.

"Now, what a queer way of doing business they have in those parts!" smiling blandly on his afflicted auditor, "in the mining districts, I mean; I take for granted, sir, that I am not addressing a gentleman interested in that particular region?"

With a polite bow and wave of the hand, Mr. Armittage encouraged further conversation.

"Such an eccentric, whirligig, uncertain kind of commercial world! One associates, naturally, ideas of stability with iron; ha! ha! but it strikes me they build more castles in the air than most people, these iron nabobs, and get blown away in consequence. Now, sir, to my mind, a man must be of sanguine temperament, or else made of very queer stuff indeed, who can sleep soundly of a night, with a conviction that all his affairs are at sixes and sevens, and that he doesn't know what may be in store for him next! I'm not a man myself that ever cared much, or thought much about making a fortune; but I do like to know *what* I have—I like to be able to lay my hands on the account book, and say to myself, 'There, that's all square; that's what I owe, and that's what I've got—and that's coming in;' that's *my* way of doing business, however."

As he paused, and waited for his companion's assent or otherwise, Mr. Armittage shook his head and said, "Very much so, indeed," with great solemnity, to the intense amusement of another passenger, though this mark of abstraction was quite lost upon the conversable gentleman beside him.

"Now that paper system," he continued, with much complacency, "those 'bills of accommodation,' as they're called, what a wretched way of cheating the public into the belief of a mercantile transaction, when it's the shallowest kind of farce that was ever invented for the sake of throwing dust into the eyes of common sense! Why, look you here, now."

Mr. Armittage was all deference and attention, while

the voluble stranger kindly enlightened him as to these objectionable doings, about which he discoursed as if in these transactions iron-masters were singular offenders, and as if, alas! they were not too frequent in all branches of business.

"I want a thousand pounds, and you want them." Could he at that moment have known his companion's feelings towards him, he would have moved farther off, but he did not, and went on in happy ignorance. "Well, sir, this is the way we mutually accommodate each other: I profess to sell you so many tons of iron, for which you give me a note-of-hand to the desired amount; you do the same by me, and so we pocket our money, while the iron, of course, remains in *statu quo*. Now, say these notes are made payable in three, or six months, from the date of that transaction—if we are able to meet the demand at that time, why, we save our credit so far—but ten to one we are not, and hardly expected to be either;" and in this amusingly unconscious manner he entertained the unfortunate iron-master during a part of the long journey; till at last, making the most of a pause, meant to be very temporary, the victim made a feint of falling asleep, and so escaped farther persecution.

HALF-AN-HOUR WITH A WORKHOUSE REGISTERS.

THE following particulars have been obtained from an investigation of the Registers of a Union Workhouse in a manufacturing district in the north of England.

Out of 100 infants baptized in the house, only 23 were born in wedlock, 77 per cent. being illegitimate. The "mothers never wed" thus constitute as prominent a feature in the workhouse community, as when the poet Crabbe so faithfully and graphically depicted that institution ninety years ago.

It has long been patent to the world that the distinction of a double christian name, with all its advantages and disadvantages, is not, in these modern times, to be regarded as a sure criterion of genteel birth. But perhaps our readers are not prepared for the announcement that more than one-fifth of the infants within the walls of this "house which holds the parish poor" are rich in the possession of more than one christian name; 21 out of the hundred had two names given in baptism, and one distinguished young female rejoiced in a triplet, Eliza Ann Julietta. It may be thought that the worthy chaplain was overstepping the bounds of good-nature in complying with the wish of the aspiring mother, but the Poor Law Commissioners have not yet issued any rules on this head, and it might have been insisted that the regulations of the establishment imposed no restrictions. The poet clergyman of a past age has favoured us with his experience, on reviewing his "Village Register."

"Why 'Lonicera' wilt thou name thy child?"

I ask'd the gardener's wife, in accents mild.

'We have a right,' replied the sturdy dame;

So Lonicera was the infant's name.

Pride lives with all: strange names our rustics give

To helpless infants, that their own may live."

Amongst the single names of the remaining 78 of the hundred in this register, were the seven following:—Agaretta, Christiana, Clara, Lavinia, Lydia, Pauline, and Rebecca.

Laying down the record, which is virtually the list of all who first see light within the walls of the building, we next take up, (for we have no marriage register here,) the book containing the names of those whose last days on earth have been passed under the shelter of

abode of public charity. And here we are furnished with results such as the Register of the Workhouse alone can supply. In no other spot in the world is there so high a rate of mortality combined with such an advanced age at death.

At the workhouse from which these accounts are taken, the number of deaths during the ten years ending December 31st, 1860, was 827. The population of the house varied from 280 to 360. If we calculate the average at 320, the annual mortality comes out at more than 25 per cent. The average number of inmates during the first nine months of 1861 was 335, and the deaths 62, or at the rate of 83 in the year. This is 25 per cent. or 1 in 4, within the merest fraction.

The above results will appear the more striking when contrasted with the rate of mortality in the country generally. The average annual number of deaths in proportion to the living is given in the Returns of the Registrar-General, as slightly under 2½ per cent., or 1 in 45. The mortality in this workhouse, therefore, exceeds that in the general community elevenfold.

This appears startling; but it is easily accounted for when the character of a workhouse population is considered. It is chiefly composed of individuals disabled either by sickness, constitutional infirmity, or old age. Many of the young and middle-aged enter the building with the stroke of death already upon them; and as for the numbers who come in bending under the weight of years, the time of their departure must needs be at hand. A high rate of mortality, therefore, is to be looked for in a workhouse as a matter of course.

It is the writer's decided conviction that the lives of the sick, infirm, and aged poor, are considerably prolonged by means of a residence in a workhouse. The advantages in the score of cleanliness, ventilation, regularity, nursing, diet, and freedom from care, are all in favour of the workhouse, as compared with the position of this class of the poor at their own homes; and this is the general impression entertained by the afflicted inmates themselves. The writer once heard an aged woman say, in her own broad phraseology, "A' was sadly agaa'in cummin' in, but a' fun' it was a good deal nicer place then a'd thowght." ["I was sadly against (very much opposed to) coming in, but I found it was a good deal nicer place than I had thought."]

The fluctuations of the deaths in the four quarters of the year present a remarkable agreement with the general rates of mortality as shown by the quarterly returns. Of the above 827 deaths, 255 occurred in the first quarters, ending March 31; 204 in the second, ending June 30; 180 in the third, ending September 30; and 188 in the fourth, ending December 31. Thus, the first quarters were the most fatal; the second quarters come next, the fourth quarters next, and the least mortality prevailed in the summer quarters. The Registrar-General's Report shows the same results, the only exceptions being during attacks of cholera or other epidemics.

During the first three quarters of the year 1861, the variations have been in the same order, but in a more extreme degree. Owing to the depressed state of trade, the average number of inmates (taken weekly) for each quarter has increased, while the deaths have diminished.

	Mar. Qr.	June Qr.	Sept. Qr.
Average inmates	323	339	345
Deaths	25	21	16

It thus appears that in the March quarter the deaths were at the rate of 7½ per cent., or 31 per cent. in the year; in the June quarter 6½, or 25 per cent. in the year; and in the September quarter 4½, or not quite 19 per cent. in the year.

This disproportion is so great as to appear very remarkable; but it is to be accounted for in part by the fact that in an increase in the number of inmates caused by depression of trade, the proportion of "able-bodied poor" is greater than at ordinary times, and fewer deaths are to be expected amongst this class of inmates, than the sickly and aged. But when allowance has been made for this consideration, we are still confronted with the connection between a low temperature and a high rate of mortality, the difference in the deaths between the first quarter and the third being much greater than the variation in the condition of the inmates.

In the twenty-one days from December 22nd, 1860, to January 11th, 1861, inclusive, the number of deaths was 15, being at the rate of 260 in the year, or 81½ per cent. The frost, during those twenty-one days, was almost unprecedentedly severe for this country, and the deaths were chiefly amongst the aged inmates.

The following is a classification of the ages of the above 827, whose deaths are registered.

Under 2 years	83	From 50 to 60	78
From 2 to 5	13	" 60 to 65	66
" 5 to 10	9	" 65 to 70	80
" 10 to 15	4	" 70 to 75	95
" 15 to 20	20	" 75 to 80	49
" 20 to 30	70	" 80 to 85	40
" 30 to 40	101	" 85 to 90	11
" 40 to 50	85	" 90 and upwards	9
Ages not specified		5.	

The writer is able to compare the above classification with the usual proportion of ages at death, in the general population of such a district as that in which the Union is situated, having made a compilation from the Funeral Register of a parish church at no great distance, and representing the same class of population.

In the workhouse, the deaths of infants under two years of age amounted to 93 out of 822, or 11½ per cent. of the entire number of deaths. In the funerals at the church of —, the per centage of infants under two years was 29½ per cent., or nearly three times the number; and the per centage under two, in the country generally, according to the official returns, is 31 per cent. But the details will be more convenient tabulated.

	Workhouse.	Interred at — Church.
Under 2 years	11½ per cent.	29½ per cent.
Under 5 "	12½ "	36½ "
Under 10 "	16½ "	47½ "
Above 20 "	42½ "	25½ "
Above 30 "	24½ "	16½ "
Above 40 "	13½ "	9½ "
Above 50 "	7½ "	4½ "
Above 60 "	2½ "	1½ "
Above 70 "	1½ "	½ "

From the above, it appears that the proportion of deaths of children in the workhouse is very little more than one-third of the proportion in an ordinary community; while the deaths above sixty years of age exceed the usual rate by two-thirds; and this proportion is more than maintained as the ages advance.

The per centage of children living in the workhouse is but slightly under that of the general community, being 4½ under two years of age, and 32½ under 15. In the census for 1851, the returns gave 5½ per cent. under two years, and 35½ under 15. This difference will make no material alteration in the disproportion of infant and juvenile deaths.

And yet we must not infer from the above statistics that the infant mortality is actually less in the workhouse than the district around it. If we were to conclude, as at first sight we might be led to do, that for every five deaths of infants outside the Union House there were only two deaths within it for the same number living, we should furnish a striking confirmation of the saying that "nothing is so deceptive as plain facts"

unless it be plain figures." The cases are not parallel. The infant mortality in the one instance is compared with the deaths in a population in which the rate of mortality is unusually high, consisting largely of the sick, the disabled, and the aged; while in the other instance, it is compared with the deaths of the general community, including the healthy and vigorous as well as the sick and aged. The comparison, therefore, ought to be more favourable in the former case than in the latter.

The per centage of deaths from 20 to 60 years of age is about the same in the workhouse as in the community generally. Very many persons of both sexes, from 20 to 35, come into the house in the advanced stages of consumption; and beyond those ages they are brought in the various diseases to which more advanced life is liable.

It has been stated that nine persons appear in the register at the age of 90 and upwards. The oldest on the book was 95. The others were 93, 92, 92, 91, 91, 90, 90.

The average age at death during the year 1860 was 50 years 2 months and 15 days. The average age throughout the country is 41 years.

WHEN IS THE PRINCE OF WALES OF AGE?

THE following is communicated by the veteran writer to whom the readers of "The Leisure Hour" are indebted for the interesting series of biographical sketches under the title of "Men I have Known."

In allowing my memory to range over times of the past, in order to rehabilitate, if I may say so, a few personal traits and characteristic anecdotes of distinguished men with whom it has been my good fortune to enjoy an intercourse more or less intimate in social life, it throws a bright ray into the sad shades of retrospect to turn occasionally to the present, and to feel that some (alas how few!) still live to mark the age by their talents and virtues. With these, a pleasing correspondence on interesting topics of the day serves to variegate the monotony of repose in some instances, or to relieve the pressure of necessary occupation in others. It has thus happened that, in reply to my congratulation to an eminent contemporary on the anniversary of his birthday (why should I withhold the name of the Lord Chief Baron?), I received a playful answer, which seems to me not only so curious in itself, but so usefully explanatory of an important permanent question, (as well as being applicable to the expected royal grant of honours to civic functionaries,) that I have been induced so far to break the bounds of privacy, and offer it for the instructive diffusion of "The Leisure Hour."

"Your congratulations," writes my respondent, on the date of his birthday, "were on completing my — year, which I did yesterday, according to legal views of the subject. In common sense they are the same thing; in law, (which often differs from common sense, especially *Statute Law*,) they are not. In law, a man completes his twenty-first year the day before his birthday; so that he is competent to sign a deed, execute a will, marry without consent of parents, etc., the day before the world would call him 'of age,' and the reason is, because the law does not take cognizance of the fraction of a day: so that, if a man be born the last minute at night of the 31st of January 1800, he is by law of age one minute after the 30th of January 1821 has commenced, because he has lived a portion of every day that completes the number of days in twenty-one years, although he may want nearly forty-eight hours of the full time.

"And after all, this is not so wide of common sense in

the usages of the word, as may at first appear; for if a man be born at eleven o'clock at night, no one doubts his being of age at the earliest moment of his birthday, though in reality the twenty-one years are not actually completed till the return of the *hour* of his birth as well as the *day*. The law only does with the first day of his life, what universally is considered right with the last day of the year, which completes any given number of years."

It follows, that if a man is fully of age and can make a will, execute a deed, etc., the day before the twenty-first anniversary of his birth, *the Prince is of age the day before his birthday*—the law considering a part of the day the same as the whole. When the 365th day of the twenty-first year has arrived, nobody inquires whether the birth took place at three o'clock A.M. or nine o'clock P.M.: and the law holds the same doctrine as to the first day and the last day. Thus the Prince will be of age immediately the clock has struck twelve, midnight, on the 7th of November 1862.

HOW MARRIAGE IS LIKE A DEVONSHIRE LANE.

The following ballad, descriptive of the Devonshire lanes of olden time, was written by the Rev. John Marriott, vicar of Broadclist, Devon:—

"In a Devonshire lane, as I trotted along,
T'other day, much in want of a subject for song,
Thinks I to myself, I have hit on a strain:
Sure marriage is much like a Devonshire lane.

"In the first place 'tis long, and when you are in it,
It holds you as fast as a cage does a linnet;
For however rough and dirty the road may be found,
Drive forward you must; there is no turning round.

"But though 'tis so long, it is not very wide,
For two are the most that together can ride;
And e'en then 'tis a chance but they get in a bother,
And jostle, and cross, and run foul of each other.

"Oft Poverty meets them with mendicant looks,
And Care pushes by them, o'erladen with crooks;
And Strife's grazing wheels try between them to pass,
And Stubbornness blocks up the way on her ass.

"Then the banks are so high, to the left hand and right,
That they shut up the beauties around them from sight;
And hence, you'll allow, 'tis an inference plain,
That marriage is just like a Devonshire lane.

"But thinks I, too, these banks, within which we are pent,
With bud, blossom, and berry, are richly besprent;
And the conjugal fence, which forbids us to roam,
Looks lovely, when deck'd with the comforts of home.

"In the rocks' gloomy crevice the bright holly grows,
The ivy waves fresh o'er the withering rose;
And the ever-green love of a virtuous wife
Soothes the roughness of care, cheers the winter of life.

"Then long be the journey, and narrow the way,
I'll rejoice that I've seldom a turnpike to pay;
And whate'er others say, be the last to complain,
Though marriage is just like a Devonshire lane."

Original Fables.

HEARTSEASE.

"Be a rose," said the Rose to a little fairy, who wanted to change herself into a flower. "I am the queen of the garden; look at my exquisite colour; smell my matchless perfume; look at my form, so full, so delicately soft. Oh, be a rose!"

"Be a lily," said the Lily; "the rose is a beauty, and she knows it," she added in a whisper; "but I can tell you, she is very subject to blight of several sorts, and often has to be washed with tobacco water and other odious things. Look at me;" and she proudly bent her head to show her golden ornaments.

"Be a dahlia," said the Dahlia; "the lily is well enough, but the snails are so fond of her leaves, that she often sits awkwardly on a bare stalk, top-heavy. Look at my velvet face, so correct in its form, so rich in its texture. Oh, be a dahlia."

"Be a convolvulus," said a brilliant azure, and crimson, and purple-blossomed one that was climbing up some trellis-work; "Dahlia is as stiff as the stick she is tied to, and she has no scent whatever. Moreover, it is whispered among the flowers that she is of low origin, being, in fact, nothing more than a kind of potato. Look at my grace and beauty. When the morning dew hangs on my purple blossoms, and the sunbeams tremble in it, I am glorious to behold."

The fairy stood irresolute. The convolvulus had not overrated her charms; but favourites have no friends.

An iris whispered, "You ought to know that Convolvulus, with all her grace and beauty, is not to be envied, for she fades before the sun is at his height, and while we are still adorning the garden there is nothing left of her but an unsightly, withered, twisted leaf."

And thus, one after another, the flowers besieged the fairy; each was the first till the rest told her tale.

"Be a pansy," at last cried out a sprightly little blossom that was perched on a wall. "Look up here, fairy; I am never troubled with blight; the snails do not think me worth robbing; nobody can call me stiff; and as to gentility, my relations, the violets under the hedges, and my more aristocratic sisters that are sitting in yon flower-bed, so well dressed and shaped that I can hardly believe we are of the same family, are guarantees for my birth."

"Nay," said the fairy, "you are but a weed."

"Don't believe it," said the pansy; "I am as much a flower as any of them: ask my cousins Excelsior and the Emperor of Russia, in that pansy bed, if we are weeds."

"But you have no name," said the fairy.

"Haven't I?" said the pansy. "Go to a poor man's garden and ask him my name—he'll tell you it is Heartsease; and where will you find a better than that? And why am I called so? Because it's my character—wherever I go, there I flourish. If the gardener seeds me, pots me, and pets me, I come out all velvet and gold, like yonder beauties. If the wind carries my seed to a wall-top or a rubbish heap, I do my best and come out in the same colours, though not so rich and bright. I rejoice alike in sunshine and shower; neither drought nor rains will destroy me. I may hang my head now and then, but I always come up again. No lot is perfect; but that is the nearest to it, which has heartsease to sweeten it. Take my advice, then, fairy, and be a pansy."

"Well, really," said the fairy, "I think I will."

OUR LOTS ARE EVEN.

"Miss, miss, how comfortable you are!" said a flock of sparrows to a canary, that hung in a handsome gilt cage in a conservatory.

"I hope you are the same," said the canary.

"It is a sharp frost, miss," they said, as they nestled close to the glass, "and the ground is as hard as iron; and if you'll believe us, there's nothing to be had for love or money; we've cleared the hedges, we've eaten all Miss Anne's crumbs, and there isn't a worm that is kind-hearted enough to show itself, to help us to a breakfast."

"Well!" said the canary.

"Yes, miss, it's very well for you, with all that beautiful seed; but if you would just let us have a little, we should take it very kind. It's fine to be you in that beautiful house among all those fresh flowers, feasting in plenty."

"Friends," said the canary, "when summer comes, the soft air, the blue sky, the flowery earth, and fruits of all kinds, with liberty of wing, and heart to enjoy them, will be yours. You may well bear the evils of your lot, the hardships of winter, nor envy me, who, though I now have plentiful food and pleasant shelter, shall have no more when you are in the fullness of delight, and nature strongly pleads within me—Why am I not equally blest?"

THINK OF OTHERS.

"How insufferable is this rain!" said a delicate carnation to her companion; "it has affected my figure, giving me quite a bend in the back, with its unmannerly large splashing drops."

"Unendurable!" was the reply, "and no necessity for it, as we are well watered by the gardener whenever we require it. My complexion will be injured; and as to my perfume, it will be washed away."

"I dislike too much water, as is well known, at any time; what, then, can be the reason of this deluge?"

Thus did the carnations echo and re-echo complaints.

A roguish little pansy, who had blossomed in a crevice of the wall, looked down on them and said, "Pardon me, ladies; you, who are supplied with all you want by the gardener, may not feel the value of this blessed shower; but if you grew on the wall as I do, and had nothing to expect but what came straight from above, you would not be so unjust to its worth. For many days back I looked up at the clear sky, hoping to see a cloud. My leaves had withered, and my blossoms curled up, when these refreshing drops restored life and joy to me."

"Very fine," said the carnations proudly; "and are we to suffer, that a weed on the wall may be refreshed?"

"Nay," replied the pansy; "all in our turn, good ladies; the rain does not fall for me alone; you are of the few that suffer from the shower, I am of the thousands who rejoice in it. If you have not the heart to be glad in the good of so many, even at the cost of a slight inconvenience, I am sorry for you, notwithstanding all your privileges, and cannot sympathise with your present complaining."

DROVER AND THE TINKER'S DOG.

"No wonder my master calls me sensible," said Drover, who began to be proud of himself; "he told the farmer yesterday, he wouldn't part with me at any price, and I'm sure he wouldn't. Well! I've earned my character; for, as he says, 'I'm never idling when my work is ready; I never was caught worrying a sheep, as old Growl did when he got in a passion. I never thieve if I am left ever so long without breakfast. No; no one can touch my character; I have that to reflect on, and it gives my meal an extra relish to think I deserve it. Besides, I know my work so well. When did I ever miss finding a stray sheep, or when did I ever let a suspicious dog come near my master's coat and basket? Why, I know a rogue at a glance; and he must have more wit than most, who could take me in. Ha, ha! take me in, indeed!' and he diverted himself with the thought, as he munched his breakfast.

He was just preparing for the last bone—the largest and the best—when a slight noise made him look beside him, and there, outside the wicket, sat an ill-looking half starved mongrel, with a ragged ear and one eye.

"It's the tinker's dog," muttered Drover, "a poaching thief; what does he want, staring at me while I am eating?"

But he could not order him away, as he was on the Queen's highway.

However, it so spoilt his breakfast, that in as polite a tone as he could manage, he begged him to understand his behaviour was very unmannerly.

"Ah, sir," said the tinker's dog, in a melancholy whine, "if you only knew what a pleasure it is to see you eat, you would not wish me to go."

"Pooh, nonsense!" said Drover; "you won't make me believe you care to see any one eat but yourself."

"That, naturally, is the highest gratification; but when it is out of the question, there is consolation in beholding the happiness of others;" and the tinker's dog began to whimper.

"Be off," said Drover; "you are a thief and a poacher, and you know it; you are half starved, and you deserve it; and take my word for it, if you do live in spite of starvation, it will only be to be hanged at last."

"Oh, sir," said the tinker's dog, "how very discouraging; but the truth is, I came to you for a little advice, and however severe you may be, I will thankfully listen. Pray, go on, sir, with that beautiful bone; I would not hinder you from it for a moment. I smelt it from the end of the lane."

Drover was much mollified. "Advice, indeed! How long will you follow it?" he asked.

"Only try me, sir," said the tinker's dog, giving a sly look with his one eye at the bone.

"Well, then, leave off your bad ways, that's my advice, and live honestly and work."

"Oh, sir, if I'm only so fortunate as to get over this fit of hunger, I'll quite surprise you," said the tinker's dog.

"Give up fighting."

"Ah, sir," he replied, shaking his ragged ear and turning his blind side to him, "see what fighting has done for me."

"And poaching," said Drover.

"Poaching!" was the answer; "why, I was out all last night and had a narrow escape of being shot. I lay close till the morning, and then, when my master found I came home with nothing, he nearly kicked my ribs in, and that's all we had for breakfast; isn't it time I was sick of poaching? If I could only get through this sad business, and have the countenance and

advice of a respectable member of society like yourself, I should, as I said, surprise you. But as it is, I must go, after I have had the pleasure of seeing you finish a breakfast you have so richly deserved, and die in a ditch—an example of the folly of bad ways."

"There!" said Drover, quite overcome, and standing away from his best bone, "you may have it."

"Oh, impossible!" said the tinker's dog, wriggling through the fence and seizing the bone, with his one eye fixed on Drover as full of admiring gratitude as it would hold.

"You can be quick," said Drover, who was still hungry, and while he heard the tinker's dog eating—for he didn't look at him—couldn't help wishing he had come for advice when his breakfast was over.

"Ah, sir," said he, with his mouth full of gristle, "you have saved my life; such a bone! believe me, I shall never forget it."

"Well, then," said Drover, "now let me tell you what I think of your way of life."

"You have told me," said the tinker's dog, licking his lips and looking towards the fence.

"Well, but how to mend it," said Drover, in some surprise at his altered tone.

"You have mended it wonderfully, with that bone," said the tinker's dog. "I am quite another thing;" and he made for the fence.

"Ay, but you wanted some good advice," said Drover, discomposed.

"Quite a mistake of yours," said the tinker's dog, who had now wriggled himself through. "I wanted some breakfast, and I knew very well the way to get it was to ask for advice. Sensible as you are, I can see farther with one eye than you can with two. But not to be ungrateful for that excellent bone, let me give you a piece of advice. Never trust repentance that comes from a hungry stomach, nor take compliments from a beggar;" and away he ran.

"I hope my master won't hear of this," said Drover, looking ashamed.

THE CROWING COCK.

"How did I crow then?" said a cock to his favourite speckled hen.

"Magnificently," said the speckled hen.

"I'll get up on the gate and crow again, that all the yard may hear. You tell them to listen." And up he flew to the top of the gate, and flapped his wings, and stretched his neck, and crowed with all his might; then, holding his head on one side, he looked down with one eye at the hens who were huddled together before the gate.

"Fine!" said the speckled hen. "Fine!" said the white hen and the brown hen, and all the hens, and as many chickens as had not their mouths full of barley.

"Do you hear that brown thing yonder?" said he, as he strutted up and down the yard, looking contemptuously at a thrush in a wicker cage, who was trilling one of his richest songs. "What do you think of the noise it makes?"

All the hens clucked with contempt.

"Friend!" said the cock to him, "you mean well, but you haven't a note of music—you should listen to me;" and then he crowed with all his might again. The hens all stood on one leg, with their eyes closed and their heads on one side, in mute admiration.

At this moment Shock, the house-dog, came out of his kennel and shook himself, as if disturbed out of a sound sleep.

"Did you hear me crow?" said the elated cock.

"Hear you! I should like to know who didn't?" said Shock. "There's no peace for you morning, noon, nor night; for the only time when you're quiet, I'm obliged to turn out to keep you from the fox."

The cock shook his gills, and looked very much astonished, and the hens whispered into one another's ears.

"Ask my hens," said the cock, indignantly.

"Your hens, indeed!" said Shock. "Why, they know nothing but what you tell them; and if they don't do as you like, you drive them from the barley. You're all very well to call up the maids in the morning, and to sing out when thieves come near the roost, but if you were not the most consummate coxcomb, you would never attempt to decry a thrush."

"I have awoke him out of his sleep," said the cock, in an explanatory voice, to his hens; and he led the way to the fold, where he flapped his wings and crowed again, but not with the same vivacity; and, although they were afraid of talking of it aloud, the hens noticed, one to another, that he never crowed much from that day in the presence of Shock.